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FOLLOW ON FORCE ATTACK: A CONCEPT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD L. NOEL, AV

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1 MAY 1990

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U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050

## Unclassified

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) Follow on Force Attack: A Concept for the 21st Century?		TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Study Project
7. AUTHOR(s) LTC Richard L. Noel	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)	
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS USAWC Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS	
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS	12. REPORT DATE 1 May 90	
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)	13. NUMBER OF PAGES 32	
15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLAS		
15a. DECLASSIFICATION DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE		
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)  Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)  Follow on Force Attack was a logical adaptation of U.S. Airland Battle doctrine to the European battlefield. However, with the changing World situation the NATO allies still must be prepared for the a worst case scenario. The Soviets still possess the capability inflict serious damage to the West. This paper examines the role of Follow-on-Force Attack as a viable concept for the near future and for use in the 21st Century.		

**USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER**

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**FOLLOW ON FORCE ATTACK: A CONCEPT FOR THE 21st CENTURY?**

**AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT**

**by**

**Lieutenant Colonel Richard L. Noel, AV**

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**U.S. Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013  
1 May 1990**

## **ABSTRACT**

**AUTHOR:** Richard L. Noel, AV

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## INTRODUCTION

Peace is breaking out all over. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) has told the world it is prepared to significantly disarm the military capability of the USSR. American politicians are steadily pushing the senior military leadership to justify every element remaining in the active component and are questioning the decision to leave armed forces forward deployed throughout the world.

There have been so many changes that it is hard to see beyond events and predict how a potential adversary will react; predictability requires transparency. The chance for misperception and miscalculation is too strong for the West to dismantle its traditional structure too quickly.

A prominent characteristic of the world in the 1990's and beyond may well be instability. While the Soviets appear to be shifting their focus toward addressing long-standing internal economic, political, and societal problems they will retain a significant military capability, both nuclear and conventional. . . Soviet policy declarations reflect changes in intentions but contain no guarantee of irreversibility.'

Has all this rush for peace clouded the thinking of the leaders of the western free world? It appears that most Western observers have lost sight of how one should gauge the Soviets. Cries for dismantling of the traditional Western response to power politics will only weaken the West's ability to respond to any disruptions that may occur to the new peace initiatives.

Realizing that many will scoff at continuing to write about

the European battlefield with an armed conflict between NATO and the USSR, this fight will still be a "high risk" scenario for the United States and will cause great losses. A "low probability" of occurrence is only an assumption made during planning and not a viable reason not to continue updating military doctrine.

NATO leaders pressed the military for a tactical doctrine that abided by international law, no violation of the inter-German border, and simultaneously refused to voluntarily cede land belonging to Western Europe. This philosophy requires early warning of hostile intent and an early decision by political leaders to alert forces. These operational considerations are the basis for FOFA.

The world situation is no longer predictable. The USSR no longer represents the only large, modern land force capable of generating sufficient combat power that could threaten U.S. interests in a respective region. When developing warplans, the U.S. land force component commander must consider the political situation and attempt to prevent inadvertant escalation of crisis situations. FOFA provided U.S. NATO commanders conventional defense and nuclear deterrence. FOFA represented a natural adaptation of Air Land Battle deep operations to the European environment and terrain, and provided the U.S. operational-level military commander the tools he needed to protect his force.

This facile euphoria that the United States' experiences is driving a reduction of American forces. Which in turn causes the Western world to look at more high-technology systems for early

warning of enemy attack intentions. However, early warning is only as good as the credibility it represents to political leaders. Early warning is only helpful to military commanders if it provides decision makers information accurately and early enough that military mobilization can begin to reinforce the continent of Europe or other trouble spots in the World without making a conflict inevitable. Because this game of early warning, reinforcement, mobilization, and posturing for conflict is high risk, the ability to take the fight to the enemy throughout the depth of his formation is critical.

FOFA gives the military commander at the operational level the ability shape the battlefield.<sup>2</sup> This commander is a joint/combined commander and he must think three to four days ahead of where he intends to fight, further if possible. This leader must shape and integrate assets to bring an overall plan together. He must be able to see his opponent in depth, understand what his enemy is doing, and develop multiple schemes of maneuver which will allow him to seize the initiative and accomplish the mission. Today, in Central Europe, this means generating an attack force, identifying a target mass in the enemy's tactical support area, and creating a situation for the commitment of this attack force. This process allows the joint commander to shape the battlefield to his advantage.

Shaping the battlefield is a joint mission and requires close coordination and an understanding of allied Air Forces and allied Ground Forces. The allied air ground operations system

and how Tactical Air assets are committed to the operation and their capabilities are critical to successful commitment of the attack force.

FOFA also provides a basis of planning for the information required between the attack force and other assets committed to a deep objective area. The doctrine established by the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force has also been adapted to the FOFA fight. The planning basis for air interdiction requirements for the Joint Second Echelon Attack (J-SAK) provide the necessary coordination for commitment of ground and air forces to strike an enemy threat deep, beyond the FLOT or the FEBA.

Air Land Battle has provided the U.S. Army the doctrinal base for the past two decades and can still provide a critical basis as we prepare our doctrine for the 21st Century.

The requirement for coordination of battlefield information will be difficult but necessary if we are to succeed. Realizing the requirements for operational readiness, the United States Army is proposing doctrine for the 21 Century. This evolving doctrine has been labeled Air Land Battle-Future.

The current Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen Carl Vuono, has issued a clear challenge with his Army Strategic Roles.<sup>3</sup> FOFA must be viable for these Army roles to work. He has identified the requirement for a smaller Army consisting of ready, expandable forces, prepared for deployment. For these forces to be a viable deterrent, we must increase our early warning time. This will allow movement of reinforcements to the area and

mobilization of required military forces if needed. These aspects are not directly germane to this discussion but impact on our ability to further increase reaction time. The more critical aspect of this issue is that these systems providing early warning can also maintain continuous contact with the threat force once it has been identified. The sophistication of battlefield detectors and sensors become important as we wrestle with how these sensors will pass target data to military commanders and ultimately to attack forces.

Air Land Battle-Future is still evolving but when viewed in light of the current world situation it addresses some critical areas that have not been adopted heretofore. Until the concept of using sensors to detect the enemy, track the enemy, and link the enemy to the attack force is matured; the U.S. military must look at current capability to fill this gap. While the electronic sensors can provide us with the ability to monitor Soviet capability, the ability to predict his intentions has become clouded by the fog of "peace."

#### ENDNOTES

1. Donald B. Rice, Air Force Policy Letter for Commanders, March 1990, p. 1.
2. General Glenn K. Otis, "Future Concepts and Capabilities in NATO's Central Region," The RUSI Journal, Winter 1988, p. 18.
3. General Carl E. Vuono, U.S. Army, A Strategic Force for the 1990's and Beyond, January 1990, overleaf.

### FOLLOW-ON-FORCE ATTACK

How does Follow-On-Force Attack (FOFA) apply in the Air Land Battle concept? The short, incorrect answer is that FOFA is nothing more than deep operations conducted in the context of U.S. Army Air Land Battle doctrine. The overall concept for FOFA is in fact a regional adaptation of the current doctrine but as in most things conducted within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), how we fight in their countries must receive the blessing of the North Atlantic Council.

The NATO concept for warfighting in Western Europe has frequently frustrated military commanders as they prepare military operations orders to fight their piece of ground. A clear and simple solution to a military mission, the best way to win the fight, is to conduct deep operations at the first signs of hostilities. For both of the U.S. Corps stationed in Western Europe, this would mean crossing the inter-German border. An option that the civil authorities in NATO will not accept. NATO has successfully, consistently conducted even-handed politics for the past forty plus years and it has done this by never willfully violating international law. Even in those world situations that have produced tense moments, like the Berlin Blockade, the leaders of NATO have followed international law as they dealt with each situation. Obviously the current situation clearly shows that NATO has done it correctly.

The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) has worked

closely with the other NATO members on the Military Committee to arrive at an adaptation of our current Airland Battle doctrine. Through SACEUR's understanding of NATO concerns and requirements and the military mission to "win the first fight" and meet the mission of deterring the "threat," FOFA has evolved.

Follow-on-Forces Attack is a joint, multilevel, focused land-air operation to delay, disrupt, or destroy the second echelon before they engage allied forces. The objectives for this are to gain time for friendly forces, relieve the weight of the attack at the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA), disrupt movement and attack plans of the enemy, and primarily to create an opportunity to seize the initiative.<sup>2</sup>

An operational commander must see the opponent in depth and understand what his enemy is doing. He must then develop a scheme of maneuver which will allow him to attack the enemy throughout his depth, and seize the initiative to accomplish his mission. Today both U.S. Corps are forward deployed in Central Europe, this means generating a reserve, attack force, and identifying the time and place for its use; shaping the battlefield.

NATO has traditionally adopted a defensive posture and projected a battlefield alignment that allows the enemy to select the time and place of the attack. Central Europe does not have any operational depth and for this reason NATO needs to be ready to meet the opponent when he comes. The allied forces in Central Europe do not intend to fight attrition type battles and

therefore the opposition's intentions must be read early on and resources allocated to shape the place where massed combat power can be thrown at the enemy throughout his formations and defeat him. The initiative must be wrested from the attacker as quickly as possible and attacking the enemy in depth will provide that opportunity.

This attack in depth must be coordinated with other Services, specifically the Air Force, to be successful. This means we must have clear identification of areas of responsibility through jointly drawn control measures<sup>3</sup>; the allotment, apportionment, and allocation of air assets with clear priorities<sup>4</sup>; joint targeting for FOFA; and using air component commander's staff to coordinate the effort.

FOFA requires the consideration of all killing systems. This is not a war of attrition. The enemy must be disrupted with any means available; missiles, rockets, bombs, artillery, electronic warfare, deception, and any other weapons. However, to disrupt the enemy he must be located and tracked and weapons must be massed for his violent destruction. The Air Force has assets working their counter air and air interdiction missions that will provide us the ability to tie these sensors and capabilities together.

This coordinated fight beyond the forward line of troops (FLOT) is valid as long as the USSR has a credible land force capable of massing its tanks in a way that would pose a threat to NATO's defensive capabilities. Therefore, the concept of Follow

on Force Attack remains a valid doctrinal concept as long as a massive land fight in Central Europe is a real possibility and will require a joint doctrine between the U.S Army and the U.S. Air Force.

#### ENDNOTES

1. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, NATO Handbook, 1989, p. 20.
2. General Glenn K. Otis, "Future Concepts and Capabilities in NATO'S Central Region," The RUSI Journal, Winter 1988, pp. 18-19.
3. Charles L. Barry, "Planning Aviation Cross-FLOT Operations," Military Review, January 1984, p. 43.
4. L. Don Holder, "Maneuver in the Deep Battle," Military Review, May 1982, p. 59.

JOINT ATTACK OF THE SECOND ECHelon.

FOFA is most effective when: air superiority is achieved, the freedom to attack enemy combat power in depth and SEAD has been accomplished in the target area; near-real-time, accurate, and continuous intelligence is available; an active land campaign forces the enemy to high consumption rates and places the unengaged enemy forces and the logistics structure at risk; and each tactical operation can be conducted any time day or night and in all weather conditions. If even one of the above aspects of the battlefield are ignored or inadequately planned for, failure and defeat are possible.

U.S. AIR FORCE MISSIONS.

The control and use of air will always affect operations. The effectiveness of air operations in fact can decide the outcome of campaigns and battles. Commanders must consider the airspace to include the apportionment of air power in planning and supporting their operations.<sup>1</sup>

Air assets can be responsive to both the battle situation and the senior land commander's perspective of the battle at the operational level. Those assets that the air force possess to accomplish their mission are readily available for use by the joint commander but only if he provides the air forces with his intent. "Land power and air power are co-equal and interdependent forces. Neither is the auxiliary of the other. The gaining of air superiority is the first requirement for success . . ."<sup>2</sup>

The Air Force's ability to provide properly focused intelligence capability and assets to bring combat power to bear is often under-utilized and this flexibility is wasted.

. . . the inherent flexibility of air power is its greatest asset. The flexibility makes it possible to employ the whole weight of the available air power against selected areas in turn. Such concentrated use of air striking force is a battle winning factor of the first importance."<sup>3</sup>

#### Counter Air.

The U.S. Army must be synchronized with the U.S. Air Force during the conduct of the Counter Air mission. The Counter Air mission is conducted by the USAF to gain and maintain the desired degree of air superiority. When the USAF crosses over the FLOT enroute to destroy an enemy capability, the U.S. Army must coordinate its attack to use these assets to penetrate to the deep operation area. The Counter Air mission is composed of three subordinate missions; Defensive Counter Air (DCA), Offensive Counter Air (OCA), and Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD), but only OCA and SEAD are directly applicable to POFA.

Offensive Counter Air is normally conducted over enemy territory and includes both air-to-air and air-to-ground attacks with the latter being the primary and most effective method of attacking the enemy's air structure.

"destroy, disrupt, or limit enemy air power as close to its source as possible. . . range throughout enemy territory and generally conducted at the initiative of friendly forces."<sup>4</sup>

The key is that OCA allows us to take the battle to the enemy at a place and time of our choosing. However, OCA is not possible until the SEAD mission has been initiated.

Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD) is an integral part of Counter Air operations and is designed to neutralize, destroy, or temporarily degrade enemy air defensive systems in a specific area by physical and/or electronic attack.<sup>6</sup>

A sophisticated air defense system may seriously challenge our ability to effectively operate over the battlefield. A SEAD campaign may be the first priority at the beginning of the conflict and is substantially bigger than just two Wild Weasels leading a hunter-killer team. For example, the first order of business may be a campaign against long range SAM and C3 nodes. The second objective would probably be a localized attack of enemy air defenses to permit operations near the FEBA or in the vicinity of a deeper target.

This second objective is where the land component commander becomes directly involved in SEAD.<sup>6</sup> SEAD is centrally planned at the Tactical Air Coordination Center (TACC) and may be a Theater campaign conducted against specific air defense systems or employed as support for their air mission attacking enemy ground threats. Decentralized execution of SEAD allows tasked units to take self-defense measures, conduct offensive attacks against targets of opportunity, and conduct Joint Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (J-SEAD) with the U.S. Army.

J-SEAD is not an option in modern warfare if a ground commander intends to include Air assets in his scheme of maneuver he must be involved in SEAD and may be required to allocate some assets to this mission. Otherwise, air assets may spend their

time on target countering enemy air defenses not supporting the ground commander's objectives. The U.S. Army must be an integral part of accomplishing the Counter Air mission otherwise the synergism of combining air interdiction and attacking ground forces across the FLOT is not possible.

Air Interdiction.

Air Interdiction directly contributes to the desired end state for FOFA.

Air Interdiction is air operations conducted to destroy, neutralize, or delay the enemy's military potential before it can be brought to bear effectively against friendly forces . . .'

Air Interdiction (AI) is an U.S. Air Force mission and is provided in general support to the Joint Force as a whole.

The BAI portion of the AI mission is not a separate Air Force mission. Air Interdiction attacks against land force targets which have a near term effect on the operations or scheme of maneuver of friendly forces, but are not in close proximity to friendly forces, are referred to as Battlefield Air interdiction (BAI). The primary difference between BAI and the remainder of the AI effort is the near term effect and influence produced against the enemy in support of the land component commander's scheme of maneuver. BAI attacks require joint coordination at the component level during planning and may require coordination during execution. BAI is executed by the air component commander as an integral part of a total air interdiction campaign.\*

Planning for AI and BAI is conducted by the Tactical Air Control Center (TACC) based on the Joint Force Commander's

interdiction objectives. Operations will normally range throughout the depth of the enemy's territory: deep against lines of communication (LOC), logistic support, and forces; or shallow against enemy units, logistic support, and LOC's.

Surveillance and Reconnaissance.

Another significant aspect of the U.S. Air Force mission is surveillance and reconnaissance. Surveillance is the systematic observation of aerospace, surface, or subsurface areas, places, persons, or things by visual, aural, electronic, photographic, or other means.<sup>9</sup> While reconnaissance is a mission undertaken to obtain, by visual observation or other detection methods, information about the activities and resources of an enemy or potential enemy; or to secure data concerning the meteorological, hydrographic, or geographic characteristics of a particular area.<sup>10</sup> To summarize, surveillance is systematic and usually continuous; whereas reconnaissance is mission oriented against specific targets. The Air Component Commander will normally have operational control (OPCON) of the fixed wing reconnaissance assets and will provide general support for the theater forces, including Corps commander's requirements. However, reconnaissance is no longer simply "ordering up" an RF-4 to take a picture of the target. That target may be under constant or periodic surveillance by several platforms with current pictures and sensor information downlinked to receiving forces.

This then is the way the U.S. Air Force provides the air umbrella over the Land component commander, while using air

interdiction, along with surveillance and reconnaissance missions throughout the theater to provide the required support for the Joint force commander's objectives and provide the land component commander needed early decision cycle information.

The establishment of the single overall commander is essential to a winning strategy. The Joint Force Commander is provided the mission by the National Command Authority. As stated in JCS Pub 2, the Joint Force Commander will exercise operational command through Service or functional component commanders, each with the broad responsibility for the successful prosecution to their portion of the air, land or naval battle.

The Land Component Commander (LCC) is responsible to the Joint Force Commander (JFC) for the successful prosecution of the land war and exercises the operational control over all assigned land forces. He may also have operational or tactical control over attached forces. He develops the scheme of maneuver, establishes objectives and priorities, assigns tasks and missions, and fights the land battle to control the land and destroy enemy forces.

The Air Component Commander(ACC) is responsible to the JFC for the successful prosecution of the air war. He exercises operational control over all assigned air forces and may also have operational or tactical control over attached forces. The ACC issues the concept of operations considering air superiority, air interdiction, reconnaissance, and close air support.

One of the primary responsibilities of the ACC is to make

the air apportionment recommendation to the JFC. Apportionment structures the force by determining the weight of effort to be given to each basic TACAIR mission. All component commanders may supply inputs and recommendations to the Air Component Commander, which, along with the guidance from the Joint Force Commander, will shape this recommendation. The Joint Force Commander will then approve or modify the apportionment and the result will be published as a percentage, or priority of the effort for each mission.

The Tactical Air Coordination Center (TACC) works the synchronization problem and develops the force packaging, planning, and tasking. A land component planning cell has been incorporated in the TACC with the addition of the Battlefield Coordination Element (BCE). The BCE works the planning aspects of the land fight and coordinates actions between the Air Component Commander and the Land Component Commander. Execution of the air mission is centrally directed and controlled through the TACC and can be adjusted as the tactical situation changes.

Fortunately, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force realized that the responsibilities of the LCC and ACC are not always as neat and clean as previously discussed. This realization caused the the U.S. Army to relook objectives at the operational-level and development of campaign plans. This caused the two services to work together in the development of attacking the enemy deep in his own territory. The result of this effort was BAI planning and execution windows in concert with an overall land campaign

plan. In practical terms, interdiction -- principally battlefield air interdiction -- became the key tool of deep operations for airland battle doctrine.<sup>11</sup>

This aspect of the deep operation Joint Attack of the Second Echelon (J-SAK) concepts have been worked between the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force regarding control arrangements, coordination, and procedures for the attack of the second echelon forces. During the targeting process, individual targets or target sets may be specifically identified using coordinates. When appropriate, requests for BAI missions should be stated in mission-type terms also.<sup>12</sup> This recognizes that combat power can be synergistically applied if the ACC and LCC work together to strike the enemy deep in his own backyard.

The bottom line is that in J-SAK the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force have agreed on a concept that accommodates both the Air Land Battle doctrine and TACAIR doctrine. J-SAK acknowledges the Land Component Commander's legitimate concern about, interest in, and need to have a strong voice in the overall conduct of the deep battle, while allowing the Air Component Commander to retain centralized control -- hence flexible application -- of airpower. These procedures outlined joint coordination mechanisms which will lead to greatly increased battlefield effectiveness.

This doctrine began evolving several years ago. The hard part is the execution; meshing the tactical responsibilities of the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force in the deep operations environment.

Fine-tuning while attacking enemy forces should become better in the future when new systems are acquired that provide more real time information and better enable us to use this information, such as J-Stars, Precision Location Strike System (PLSS) and the Ground Attack Control Center (GACC).

#### ENDNOTES

1. U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-5: Operations, p. 48.
2. U.S. War Department, FM 100-20: Command and Employment of Airpower, p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 7.
4. U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, JCS Pub 1-02: Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, p. 260.
5. U.S. Department of the Air Force, Air Force Manual 1-1: Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force (Draft), p. 1-2.
6. U.S. Readiness Command, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command and U.S. Air Force Tactical Air Command, USREDCOM Pam 525-3/TRADOC TT 100-44-1/TACP 50-23: Joint Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (J-SBAD) Operations, p. 12.
7. U.S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-5: Operations, p. 48.
8. U.S. Readiness Command, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, and U.S. Air Force Tactical Air Command, USREDCOM Pam 525-8/TRADOC Pam 525-45/TACP 50-29: General Operating Procedures for the Joint Attack of the Second Echelon (J-SAK), p. 2-9.
9. JCS Pub 1-02, p. 260.
10. Ibid., p. 304.
11. General Donn A. Starry, U.S. Army, "Extending the Battlefield," Military Review, March 1981, p. 42.
12. USREDCOM Pam 525-8/TRADOC Pam 525-45/TACP 50-29, p. 3-5.

### AIR LAND BATTLE - FUTURE

The sooner the Air Land Battle - Future (ALB-F) doctrine is finished, the easier it will be to affect Conventional Forces Europe negotiations because emerging doctrine will have a direct effect on bargaining. Negotiators are normally not operators and they need a sound bargaining position for capabilities in the 21st Century. The credibility of the United States in these negotiations will provide stability and give stronger positions for the parity of US and USSR military forces.

Air Land Battle, as it currently exists, has two basic areas that need to be reviewed. First, the world situation will force the U.S. Army to down-size the force. Realistically this may be the correct time to review force mix and provide a battlefield commander a leaner more mobile force that can react to fast-breaking situations. This will provide a commander with an agile force to compliment the mental agility that has been stressed in the school house for years. Second, the textbook battlefield has remained one where the enemy continues to flow towards his objective and is attacked throughout his operational depth. No longer will a Land Component Commander be able to establish a line of forces and generate combat power across the entire front. The capability to track the enemy's main effort and mass decisive fire power and combat forces at a key point in time and space is technically possible and must be explored as an option for the

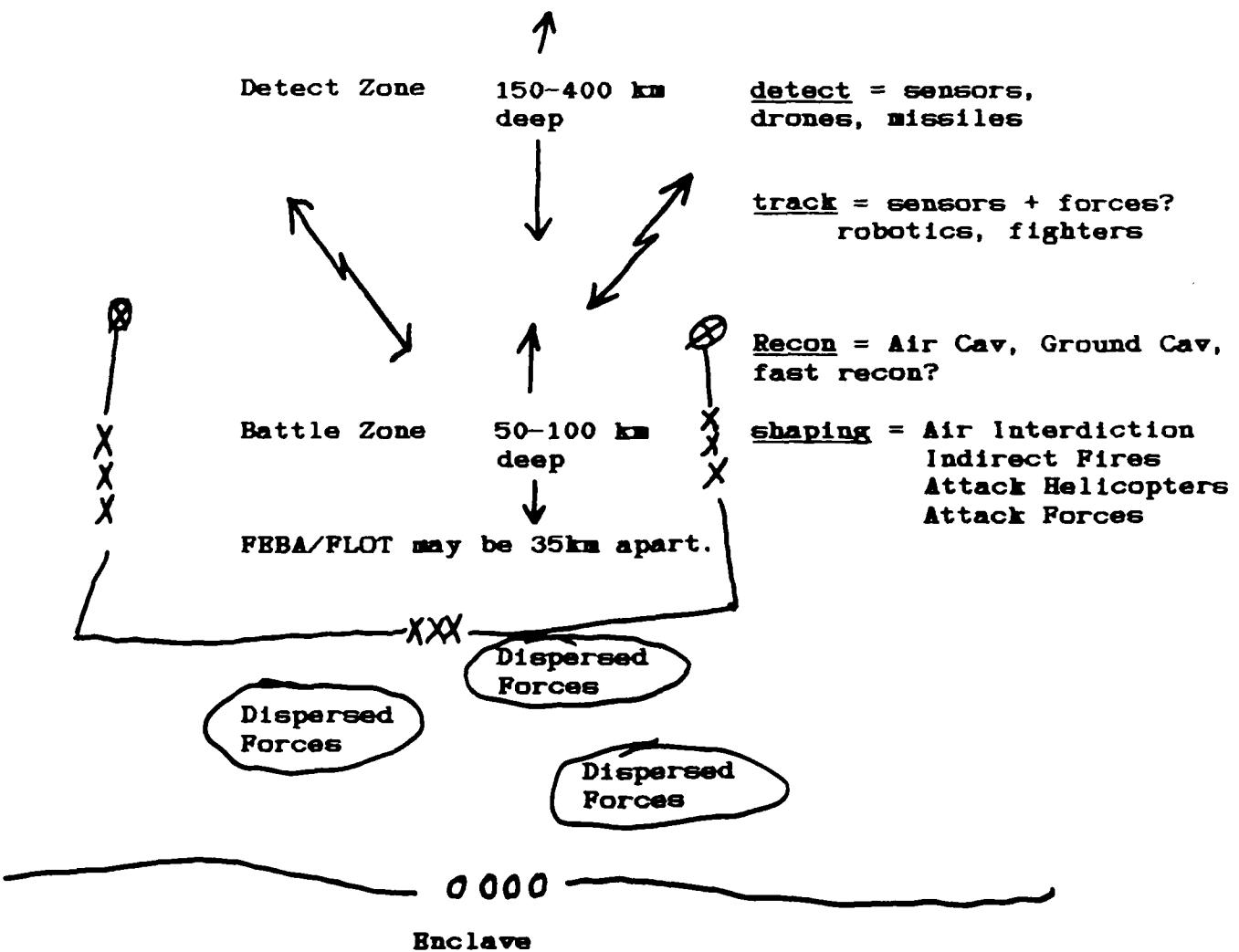
future. This non-linear battlefield represents an acceptable calculated risk, as opposed to the more dangerous risk of employing too few forces to meet the enemy across the entire front.

The trends of reduced resources and perceptions of a significantly reduced threat provide growing challenges to senior military leaders. The goal is to maintain a credible military deterrent force. The post-CFE period may be our toughest period thus far. Warning time will be critical and the credibility of warning indicators must be established with National decision makers. High technology can only provide early warning not the methods to reduce military reactions to these hostile warnings. The trends required to establish the credibility of U.S. land forces are that they must be ready, expandable, and mobile.<sup>1</sup> Once deployment and mobilization have been ordered, taking the fight to the enemy is critical to winning.

This ability to take the fight to the enemy not at a point of his choosing is the challenge. This is a planning phenomenon not a high tech capability. Remember -- the plan is nothing but planning is everything. To survive the nonlinear battlefield we must know where the enemy is and quickly gain and maintain the initiative. This requires long range, accurate detection systems. For the come-as-you-are-fight, these systems are currently available in the U.S. Air Force.

The concept for Air Land Battle-Future will use technology to find the enemy and link these sensors to the attack assets.

The first priority will be to mass fires to destroy the enemy. If forced to commit ground forces, then dispersed attack forces will be massed, fight, redisperse and reconstitute.<sup>2</sup> This scenario for attack forces in Air Land Battle-Future is represented on the following hypothetical battlefield.



In this scenario, there must be a linkage between the sensors detecting and tracking the target mass. Economically

as a dollar and manpower cost this lashup will ultimately be relegated to electronic sensors, "electrons." The confidence factor in the electronic indicators for early warning and tracking has grown year by year as they are used in the nuclear deterrent mode. But the requirement to have the information passed immediately to the land component commander and his forces shaping the battle have not been adequately developed. The linkage between the "electrons" and the attack force is envisioned to be fast ground reconnaissance forces.

Today we have cavalry and reconnaissance units that provide the information for maneuver forces and this procedure will continue. However, as this doctrine evolves recon forces must become faster and provide immediate communications to the land component commander. In the meantime, Air Cavalry and Ground Cavalry units will meet this mission need.

TRADOC is working the force design piece of this modernization effort. Essentially the operational commander's attack force building blocks will be self-sufficient brigades. The Flag headquarters will be a reporting headquarters and corps will provide plugs directly to the attack force. For example, a significant piece of this concept is aviation. When the attack force is identified it will receive self-contained attack helicopter and air reconnaissance units.\*

The ability to have a dedicated attack force positioned to react to the threat, mass that force, conduct the attack and recock to attack again is a high risk economy of force mission.

This implies that we must make rapid accurate decisions, have a reliable, strong command and control, reliable communications, and tactical offensive operations that can avoid attrition.

Some useful conclusions can be drawn from this examination of a most potent tactic, FOFA. First, the use of Ground forces to include helicopters deep in the enemy's rear can be a high-payoff operation with the potential of seizing the initiative from the enemy. These operations must be planned and executed as joint operations. They must be integrated and synchronized. As with the employment of all assets, the ground component commander's scheme of maneuver must be fully incorporated. Finally, many aspects must be included such as detailed and continuous intelligence, Suppression of Enemy Air Defense, Air Interdiction, and Electronic counter measures.

There are several deep missions for ground force commanders but none can be hasty operations. The attack force identified for these missions can only plan for the operation in sufficient detail if they are not dual committed. This places a high risk that the economy of force unit is adequately manned to meet the mission. The U.S. Army can complement the Air Forces contribution to striking the enemy throughout the depth of the battlefield, but only if we adequately plan.

Air Land Battle-Future provides the wrath of overpowering, massed, focused weapons systems brought to bear against an adversary. In some cases this action may only involve a single service, Naval or the Air, enforcing the national will, however,

more often the operation will be joint. Planned and executed at the operational level. A short violent conflict that will allow forces to be withdrawn as quickly as nation building personnel can be employed. The planning to have a detailed intelligence network detecting and tracking the enemy, linking these intelligence systems to military forces that can directly bring force to bear, and committing all combat power at the decisive point is all the same for the military commander. The difference lies in how large or extensive a force is committed to the battle once joined.

ALB-F will not happen overnight. It took 40 years for an even-handed approach to succeed in Europe and ALB-F will be harder to tailor to world-wide situations, but the attitudes and initiative identified in POFA as it exists today will enhance the capability for a smaller force to maintain its credibility in the world.

#### **ENDNOTE**

1. General Carl E. Vuono, U.S. Army, A Strategic Force for the 1990's and Beyond, January 1990, overleaf.
2. BG William M. Boice, "Air Land Battle - Future," Briefing presented to USAWC #90, 21 February 1990.
3. U.S. Department of the Army, Combined Arms Combat Development Activity, TRADOC MSG 061800Z Dec 1989: ALBF Force Designs, p. 2, para. 2.b.

## CONCLUSION

The Cold War is over and the Democratic Free World has won. However, as is frequently the case, the plan for conflict termination is severely lacking. The U.S. Armed Forces must continue to be a deterrent, however the American Public and therefore the Congress wants to proceed from military presence to nothing without leaving the "constabulary" in place until the instability lessens. The free world has a pretty good idea of what the communists have rejected but not where they are going. The bottom line is that expectations are far outstripping the realities of the world situation.

Members of the legislative branch of the U.S. Government repeatedly tell the senior military leaders that there is not an updated National Military Strategy and until there is an updated strategy there will not be any serious discussions of appropriations. Invariably, the senior military leader can articulate a strategy but not one that Congress wants to hear. The National Military Strategy: deterrence through strength; forward defense, flexible response; coalition warfare; and regional contingencies; has essentially not changed over the last forty years and probably will not change soon.<sup>1</sup> The problem that the military created for itself was the failure to adequately address the threats in the other regions of the world during the last decade. This error has allowed the overshadowing USSR threat to be the primary basis for force structure and

modernization.

An analysis of the rhetoric concerning the defense budget does not necessarily mean there is not a serious push to change the National Military Strategy. The push for change is directly tied to how the Department of Defense intends to continue as a credible deterrent force and simultaneously reduce the force structure. The U.S. Armed Forces must continue to provide conventional defense against outside forces and nuclear deterrence in Europe and counter any potentially hostile forces in other parts of the world.<sup>2</sup>

This has given rise to the discussion of Air Land Battle-Future and the viability of using high-technology systems to replace manpower on the battlefield where ever possible. This ability to field an agile, highly maneuverable force will provide a credible military land force for commitment to high probability regional conflicts and be an expandable force for larger conflicts.

The missing link in these discussions is the consideration of warning time and how it translates to reaction time. Almost daily a member of the National Command Authority is briefed on the hot spots in the world. Each of these potential crisis areas requires some action even if it is wait and see. Inevitably the elements of national power are considered and utilized if deemed appropriate. The military element of power is considered along with the others and normally is the last element of power used; rightly so. However, as the other elements of power are working

the military is held in check because the preparation and movement of military forces will be reported in this information age, and this information about reinforcement or mobilization activities can jeopardize other negotiating efforts.

As an adaptation of the Air Land Battle deep operation, FOFA had utility in the Post World War II era. If NATO leaders were unable to resolve a crisis through all other means available, FOFA provided a concept for large land forces to repel an attack by heavy enemy land forces. However, as the U.S. Armed Forces realign for the 21st Century, FOFA will not meet the need for an offensive defense by outnumbered forces on a non-linear battlefield. Follow On Force Attack was a logical adaptation of U.S. Air Land Battle Doctrine to the European battlefield and was surely one of the elements that contributed to the evolving situation in Europe. However, FOFA will not provide the U.S. Armed Forces with the offensive defense that will allow an outnumbered force to win on the battlefield of the 21st Century.

#### ENDNOTE

1. U.S. Department of the Army, Headquarters Training and Doctrine Command, Airland Battle-Future: An Evolving Concept, 28 February 1990, p. 1.

2. Michael R. Gordon, "Bunn Proposes Sharp U.S. Military Cuts in Europe," New York Times, 20 April 1990, p. A1.

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19. Vuono, Carl E. A Strategic Force for the 1990's and Beyond. Washington: Government Printing Office, January 1990.